

Around Town

CONTACT US | FRAN VALENCIC | franvalencic@comcast.net | SUN NEWSPAPERS



GONDOLIER PHOTOS BY FRAN VALENCIC

(L-r) Michelle Lamont, Lt. A. Leisenring, Capt. E. Hill, Chief Tom Mattmuller, Melissa Smith, Mary Moscatelli, Lynn Field and Captain Charlie Thorpe are on hand to view the magnificent sculpture Valor given as a gift to the Venice Police Department by the Venice Art Center. Michelle is chair of the Board of Directors of the Venice Art Center, Lynn serves on the board. Mary is the Executive Director of the Venice Art Center.

Seahorse becomes an eagle for police department

The Venice Art Center recently introduced Mermaids and Seahorses to the Community as their FantaSea Venice fundraising project.

The whimsical and mysterious looking sculptures add an adventure to an already pretty landscape. Not far from downtown on east Venice Avenue in front of the new Venice Police Department sets the magnificent Valor.

At the base of the sculpture are the words, "Our Citizens Our Community Our Commitment." They are supposed to look like they are written in the sand.

Valor is a gift to the Venice Police Department from the Venice Art Center.

"We wanted to do something special for our police," Michele Lamond, chair of the Venice Art Center board, said.

"We wanted to give back to the City of Venice and the hardworking officers of Venice," added Mary Moscatelli, executive director of the Venice Art Center.

Valor was designed and painted by Melissa Smith, who says she sought input from artists, family and friends for the project.

Advice from Carolyn of the Venice Police Department was, "Do whatever you want as long as our badge and slogan are on it." Melissa spent hours on the Venice Police Facebook Page, researching.

On Pinterest, she found eagles and flags related to police. Mary Apostolu reminded Melissa of the land, sea and bikes police use.

"Our officers do so much with children, I wanted to show that. The badge was my favorite thing to do. I like detail," Melissa said.



FRAN VALENCIC
Columnist

While sitting and looking at the blank seahorse, Melissa decided with a little tweaking it could look like an eagle head. She got out her hack saw and sawed off the snout of the sea horse.

She then thought, "You are in deep now, Melissa." She had to saw off the sea horse eyes, too. Her husband helped her work quickly with clay to create the feathered head.

And beautiful Valor was born.

ONE OF OUR BEST

The special person of this week is Melissa Smith. This terrific artist attended Venice High and lived in Fairhope, Alabama.

Melissa has a most interesting biography and has a great sense of humor and fun.

She makes pictorial maps of areas and has sold more than 4,000. Search Melissa online for more information. You can also search "custom art by Melissa Smith."

You will be mesmerized. Melissa Smith is one of the women who makes Venice a great place to live.

Fran Valencic is the social columnist for the Venice Gondolier Sun. She welcomes your tips and ideas. Contact her at franvalencic@comcast.net.



Venice Chamber of Commerce CEO Kathy Lehner and Venice Police Captain Charlie Thorpe were on hand for the official presentation of Valor to the Venice Police Department.



Artist Melissa Smith sought input from family, friends and artists as she created Valor, the special gift to the Venice Police Department from the Venice Art Center.



Valor stands magnificently at its permanent home in front of the new Venice Police Department on East Venice Avenue.

A Better Way To Care, A Better Way To Live!

Handling Falls and Emergencies • Medical Appointments and Transportation Needs
Managing Medications • Bathing, Dressing, Feeding, Incontinence Care • Providing A Secure Environment



Cadbury Park

Assisted Living and Memory Care at Jacaranda Trace



Immediate Availability! Call (941) 408-2050 • 3600 William Penn Way, Venice • www.CadburyPark.com